

**Meeting of the Cabinet – 11<sup>th</sup> February 2009**

**Report of the Director of Finance**

**Update of the Council's Capital Strategy**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To re-consider the update of the Council's Capital Strategy following consideration by Select Committees.

**Background**

2. The Capital Strategy forms part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework, and can therefore be amended only by the full Council following consideration by the Select Committees.
3. The draft Capital Strategy (attached) was approved by the Cabinet on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2008 and has now been considered by each Select Committee.
4. Specific concerns and comments arising from consideration of the draft Strategy at the various Committees have been forwarded to the appropriate persons.

5. In addition, the Select Committee on Community Safety and Community Services resolved that the following specific issues be reported back to Cabinet:

- Regarding the development of customer/citizen access to services, reference was made to the need to examine, as part of the capital strategy how shops in small shopping centres, for example on housing estates, might be utilised to deliver local services to local people and, given the recent spate of Post Office closures, how possible joint arrangements, with Post Offices being incorporated in shops, might be entered into which could mean that such shops would be more viable. It was considered that the issue of Post Office closures should be pursued through Area Committees as they considered a report on closures at recent meetings. Also, that the relevant Directorates, for example Finance, ICT and Procurement, and Adult, Community and Housing could start to examine now the delivery of local services, so that such considerations could impact on any rationalisation of property usage. Similar consideration could also be given in relation to developments in respect of Dudley Council Plus.
- That the revenue implications of capital projects should be considered at an early stage of their development, so as to avoid the difficulties that had occurred with a scheme referred to by a member at the meeting.

**Finance**

6. As described above, the Capital Strategy forms an integral part of the Council's strategic financial and service planning and supports decisions on capital investment

under the "Prudential" system.

### **Law**

7. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or which is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of its statutory functions.

### **Equality Impact**

8. The proposed Capital Strategy complies with the Council's policy on equality and diversity. In particular, through this Strategy and the Asset Management Plan the Council will be seeking to comply with its responsibilities with regard to access for disabled people to its buildings.
9. With regard to Children and Young People:
  - The Capital Investment Priorities for Children's Services wholly relate to improving services for children and young people. Other Directorates' investment priorities will also have a significant impact on this group.
  - Consultation is undertaken with children and young people, if appropriate, when developing individual Capital projects.
  - There has been no direct involvement of children and young people in developing the proposals in this report.

### **Recommendations**

10. That the Cabinet:
  - considers the issues raised by the Select Committee on Community Safety and Community Services as set out in paragraph 5;
  - recommends the draft Capital Strategy attached for approval by the Council.



.....  
**Mike Williams**  
**Director of Finance**

Contact Officer: John Everson  
Telephone: 01384 814806  
Email: [john.everson@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:john.everson@dudley.gov.uk)

### **Background Papers**

Community Strategy  
Council Plan